

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: PAKISTANI NUCLEAR FACILITIES

REF: STATE 071591

1. THE FRENCH NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S LETTER URGING RECONSIDERATION OF THE SALE OF THE RE-PROCESSING PLANT TO PAKISTAN REFLECTED SEVERAL FRENCH VIEWS AND OPINIONS:

- A) THE GOF HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THIS SALE IN 1972;
- B) THE GOF, IN ITS VIEW, HAD NEGOTIATED A SOUND AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN FULLY REFLECTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE LONDON SUPPLIERS GUIDELINES (EXCEPT THE STARTING DATE FOR 20 YEARS SAFEGUARDS ON TECHNOLOGY);
- C) FOR SEVERAL MONTHS THE USG HAD BEEN CURRENTLY INFORMED OF THE DETAILS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND COULD HAVE OBJECTED AT A MUCH EARLIER POINT THAN A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE BG MEETING OF THE IAEA;
- D) THE FRENCH IMAGE IN THE EYES OF OTHER POTENTIAL PURCHASERS OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES WOULD BE HURT IF THE USG AGAIN (SOUTH KOREA BEING THE FIRST) STOPPED SUCH A SALE AFTER TERMS HAD BEEN AGREED UPON.
- E) THE USG HAS A BETTER POLITICAL GRIP ON SOUTH

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KOREA THAN DOES THE GOF--IN PAKISTAN THE USG DOES NOT

HAVE THAT ADVANTAGE.

--F) FRANCE WANTS TO EXPORT ITS NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY TO BENEFIT ITS FOREIGN TRADE BALANCE AND TO KEEP ITS NUCLEAR INDUSTRY ALIVE; IT WILL RESPECT THE MINIMUM INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED AND PRACTICED CONDITIONS ON SUCH SALES.

--G) THE USG SHOULD TREAT THE GOF ON AN EQUAL BASIS AND NOT EXPECT FRANCE TO AGREE AT THE LAST MINUTE TO SUCH REQUESTS.

2. ITEMS A, B, AND C IN PARAGRAPH 1 APPEAR IN THE MINISTER'S RESPONSE. THE FACTS OF LIFE IN FRANCE (F) PUSH THE GOF TO MAKE SALES WHILE A FACT OF LIFE REGARDING THIRD COUNTRIES (E) WILL CAUSE FRANCE TO RESPECT A USG INTERVENTION AS IN SOUTH KOREA OR TO NOT RESPECT USG OBJECTIONS AS HAS BEEN THE CASE SO FAR IN PAKISTAN. THE FRENCH MINISTER DOES NOT ARGUE WITH THE SECRETARY'S VIEWS OF THE RISKS INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED SALE TO PAKISTAN. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S VIEW THAT THE GOF WOULD HAVE NO BASIC OBJECTION TO THE PLANT FOR PAKISTAN BEING BINATIONAL OR MULTINATION-AL--IN FACT, THE PROSPECT OF FRENCH TECHNOLOGY BEING USED FOR THE FIRST REGIONAL REPROCESSING PLANT (A USG PROPOSAL) WOULD BE AN ATTRACTIVE ASPECT TO THE GOF. (THE SITING AND MANAGEMENT OF A REGIONAL PLANT ARE SIGNIFICANT ISSUES.)

3. THE GOF IS NOT APT TO SLACKEN ITS INTERESTS IN SELLING REPROCESSING PLANTS TO OTHERS. SUCH PLANTS WILL BE NEEDED, THE US IS NOT NOW OPERATING ANY, AND THE GOF SEES THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET A STRONG HOLD ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR SUCH PLANTS. WHILE THE MINISTER BASED HIS RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S LONG-STANDING COMMITMENT TO PAKISTAN, THE USG MUST ASSUME THAT FRANCE WILL ENGAGE IN SIMILAR SALES IN THE FUTURE WHERE ITS NET INTERESTS CAN BE FULFILLED--SELL A PLANT, BE A RESPONSIBLE SAFEGUARD PROONENT (PER FRENCH READING OF THE LONDON SUPPLIERS GUIDELINES) AND MAKE (AT LEAST NOT LOSE) POLITICAL POINTS.

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